



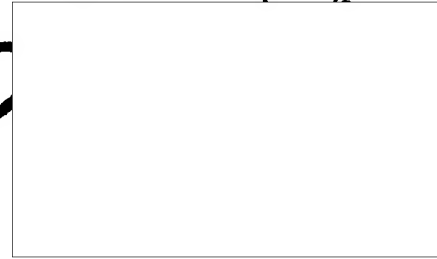
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Afghanistan Situation Report



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16 October 1984

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

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The latest Soviet effort to block insurgent supply routes is likely to fail.

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RECENT BORDER STRIKES

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Soviet or Afghans have attacked Pakistani territory at least six times since August.

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Insurgents suffer from a lack of trained medical personnel, medical facilities, and medical supplies.

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Increased Soviet pressure was signaled by an editorial in June and dramatized by Moscow's account of Gromyko's meeting with his Pakistani counterpart at the UN.

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**This document is prepared weekly by the Office of Near Eastern
and South Asian Analysis and the Office of Soviet Analysis.
Questions or comments on the issues raised in the publication
should be directed**



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EFFORTS TO HALT CROSS-BORDER TRAFFIC



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Babrak Karmal announced in mid-September an Afghan Politburo decision to close Afghanistan's border with Pakistan to insurgents. Since that time, Soviet forces have been establishing ambush positions and mining insurgent infiltration routes through Lowgar and Paktia Provinces,



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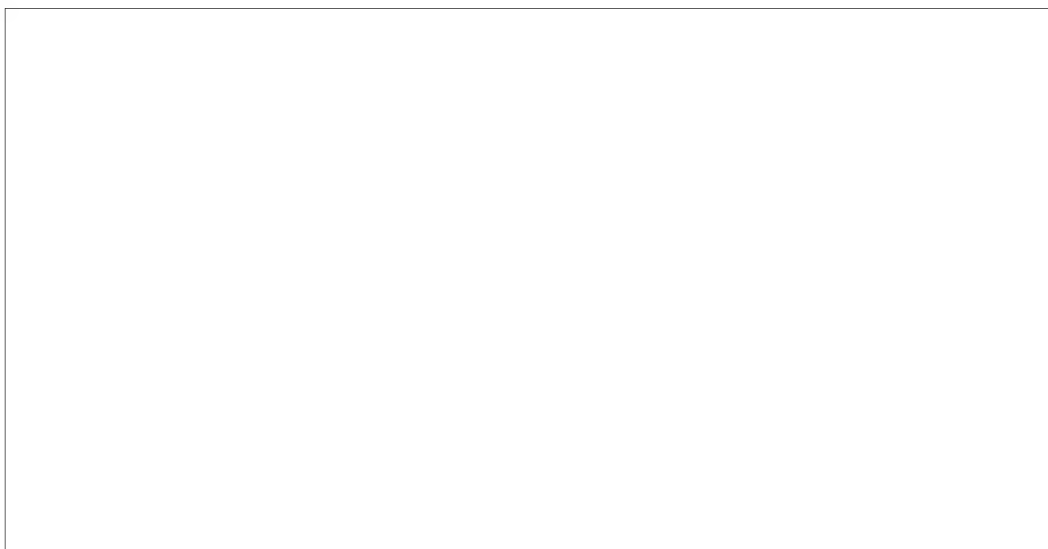
Comment:

Given the rugged terrain, insurgent familiarity with alternate routes, and current troop levels, we doubt the Pak-Afghan border can be closed. Moreover, the Afghan regime has had little success with propaganda, and tribes are notorious for taking bribes and continuing to help the insurgents. Soviet and Afghan measures, however, have sometimes forced resistance convoys to use longer and more hazardous trails.



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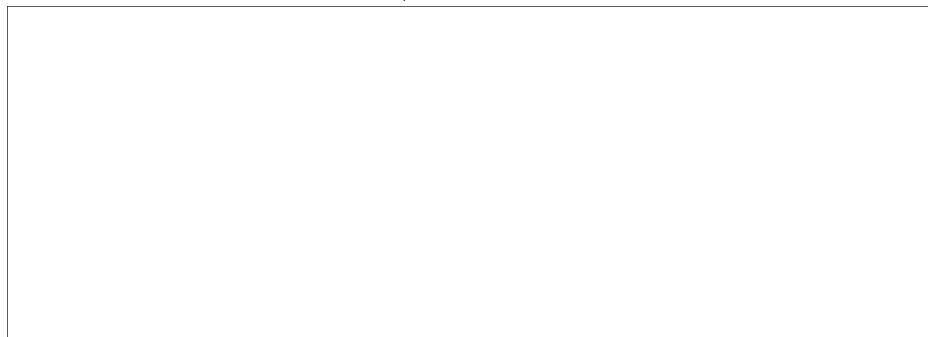


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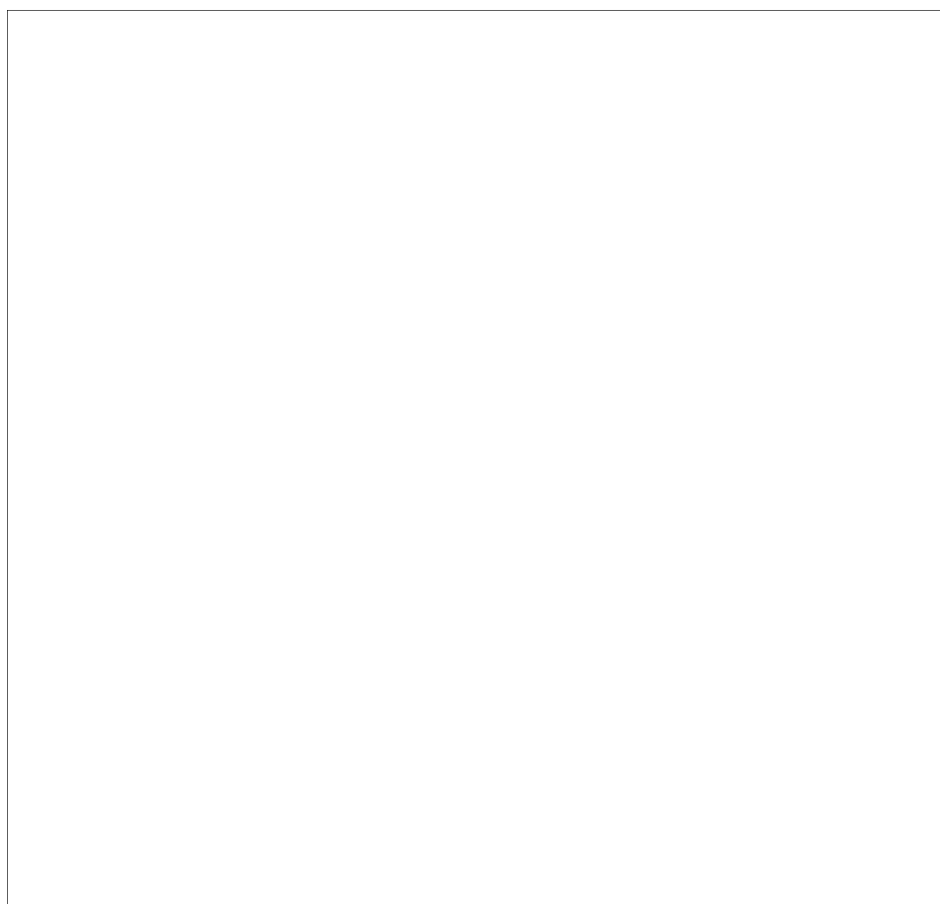
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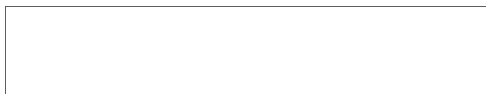
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IN BRIEF

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-- The US Embassy in Kabul reports that the UN is considering reducing its personnel in Kabul because of increased insurgent rocket attacks. Such a reduction would be a serious blow to Afghan Government claims that Kabul is calm.

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-- According to the French charge in Kabul, Jacques Abouchar, the captured French journalist, admitted at a press conference on 11 October that he had entered Afghanistan illegally, but denied that he had aided the resistance. At the press conference, an Afghan official said that Abouchar would be tried.

-- The minister-counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Kabul told a West German diplomat that he represented the Soviets at the third round of Geneva talks. Previous reports had indicated that the Soviets had not been at Geneva.

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-- Kabul Radio reported last Thursday that nine insurgents have been sentenced to death for setting off a bomb at Kabul Airport on 31 August.

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-- According to official Pakistani figures, 2,658,725 Afghan refugees were in Pakistan on 31 August, 205,019 less than a year ago. [] refugees are still fleeing Afghanistan and that the refugee population is growing. The official figure--which we believe is still inflated--declined because of a recount in the North-West Frontier Province. Pakistani officials expect a recount in Baluchistan to bring a further reduction in the official total. []

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PERSPECTIVE**THE AFGHAN INSURGENTS AND MEDICAL CARE**

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The insurgents in Afghanistan suffer from a lack of trained medical personnel, inadequate medical facilities, and inadequate medical supplies. Much better treatment is available to them in Pakistan and, to a lesser degree, Iran, but often requires arduous travel. Better medical care inside Afghanistan would make the insurgents a more effective fighting force and probably would improve their motivation as well.

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From Bad to Worse

Even before the Soviet invasion, Afghans suffered from extremely poor medical care. According to international health surveys made in the mid-1970s, only 15 percent of the rural population had access to government health services--one of the lowest ratios in the world. The surveys showed that 40 percent of the population suffered from respiratory diseases, including tuberculosis, and from intestinal parasites. Afghans generally did not live long enough to die of cancer or heart disease; most died of measles, dysentery, or pneumonia.

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Since the invasion, medical conditions have become even worse. Afghan insurgents must contend with infected gunshot and shrapnel wounds of the limbs that often require amputation; if the wounds are serious enough, insurgents sometimes must be transported hundreds of kilometers for treatment in Pakistan or Iran. Insurgents also suffer from exposure because of poor shelter and long marches in cold and hot weather. Exposure, poor diet, and the stress of combat also aggravate the widespread respiratory and intestinal diseases in Afghanistan. The parents and children of insurgents, who sometimes accompany insurgent bands, are even more vulnerable to exposure and disease.

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Nearly all insurgent groups in Afghanistan suffer from a lack of trained medical personnel, inadequate medical facilities, and inadequate medical supplies. few insurgent

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[redacted]

groups have regular contact with trained doctors or nurses, many of whom have fled the country, been drafted into the Afghan Army, or work in cities. Most insurgents either receive medical care from paramedics who have had rudimentary training in Pakistan or with the Afghan Army, or from totally untrained personnel--often mullahs--who are only qualified to clean wounds and recite prayers. [redacted]

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Insurgent medical facilities and supplies are also poor. [redacted]
[redacted] medical instruments are primitive and electricity nonexistent. Surgery is often performed with inadequate pain-killers and disinfectants. Even when medicines are available, insurgents usually cannot read those labeled in foreign languages; pills are often handed out without any understanding of their curative functions. Opium is used, as it has been for generations, to treat a wide variety of ailments. [redacted]

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The Cities and Eastern Afghanistan

Medical care appears to be somewhat better in the Afghan cities and in the eastern part of the country. [redacted]

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[redacted] for example, the medical situation is fairly good in Herat City. Insurgents operate three clinics with 35 beds, a staff of 19 trained medical personnel, and a training facility where doctors teach first aid. A team of three doctors travels by motor bike to treat seriously wounded insurgents in outlying areas of Herat. [redacted]
[redacted] medicines can also be relatively easily purchased in Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif, the country's fourth largest city. [redacted]

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[redacted] the medical situation is poor in Qandahar because of the extensive fighting that has taken place there. [redacted]

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The medical situation in eastern Afghanistan is generally better than elsewhere in the country because of the proximity to Pakistan and Kabul. [redacted] many insurgent bands have received drugs and bandages purchased in Pakistan, and some bands see traveling Afghan doctors fairly regularly. Some of the Afghan doctors are funded by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, whose director told the US Embassy in 1983 that it had set up nine mobile clinics of which eight were in the eastern provinces. [redacted]

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European Medical Personnel

Young European doctors and nurses, most of whom are French, provide some of the best medical care for the insurgents in Afghanistan.

[redacted] the Europeans, who treat both insurgents and civilians, perform major surgery, particularly amputation and appendectomies; establish inoculation programs, particularly for tuberculosis; treat lesser illnesses; and train paramedics. [redacted]

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Better Treatment in Pakistan and Iran

Insurgents have much better access to adequate medical personnel, facilities, and supplies when they can get to Pakistan and, to a lesser degree, Iran. One US diplomat, who has served in the border area, reports that Pakistani officials say that Pakistani and Afghan doctors and nurses are fairly numerous there. The diplomat believes that the Pakistani doctors, at least, are generally competent, although the nurses are less so. [redacted]

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Medical facilities are also fairly good in the Pakistani border area. According to the same diplomat, the Red Cross operates two hospitals

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expressly for Afghans wounded in fighting. The facility in Peshawar has a surgical unit with 100 beds, a rehabilitation unit for paraplegics with 100 beds (50 are reserved for Pakistanis), and an artificial limb unit with about 50 beds; a smaller hospital in Quetta has 60 beds. Insurgents also use Pakistani hospitals and clinics run by the UN, Western organizations, and several insurgent groups, and clinics funded by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. []

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Medical supplies are available in quantity in the Pakistani border area. According to the US diplomat, medicine manufactured in Pakistan is both plentiful and cheap. Wheel chairs manufactured in Pakistan are also available. []

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Insurgents are taking better advantage of medical facilities in Pakistan, in our view. [] insurgent leaders are more familiar with the expanding facilities across the border than in the past. Insurgents also benefit from Red Cross ambulances that have been stationed at five points along the border since 1984 and which rush wounded insurgents to Peshawar. Vehicle-owning entrepreneurs, moreover, have increased taxi service between the Afghan border and Peshawar. []

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Insurgents who are seriously wounded in the western Afghan provinces are sometimes sent to Iran for treatment. [] the wounded are transported to Mashhad, the largest nearby town in Iran, where they are treated by Afghan doctors. []

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Conclusion

Better medical personnel, facilities, and supplies in Afghanistan would make a major contribution to the Afghan insurgency. It would also reduce the necessity of transporting insurgents, often hundreds of kilometers, for medical treatment in Pakistan and Iran. Many wounded insurgents die during these arduous trips, often from gangrene. The discrepancy between the quality and availability of medical care in Pakistan and in Afghanistan, in fact, probably discouraged some insurgents from risking combat far from the border. []

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Better care for insurgents and their families would also improve morale. Insurgents who knew that adequate medical treatment was available probably would be more willing to risk combat and fight

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aggressively once in combat. Similarly, an insurgent who knew that someone in his insurgent group could provide competent medical care and useful medical supplies to his family would respond with gratitude and loyalty. Adequate medical treatment is an integral part of a well-developed insurgency. 

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PERSPECTIVE**MOSCOW SHARPENS RHETORIC ON PAKISTAN'S ROLE IN AFGHANISTAN***

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Moscow has notably sharpened its public criticism of Pakistan for its alleged support of Afghan insurgents. Increased Soviet pressure on the issue was signaled in June in a rare PRAVDA editorial article on Pakistan and was dramatized more recently in Moscow's acerbic account of Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's 20 September meeting with his Pakistani counterpart at the United Nations.

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According to the official TASS account, Gromyko delivered an unusually sharp rebuke to Pakistani Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan during their regular meeting in connection with the opening of the UN General Assembly session. For the first time at such a meeting since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Gromyko reportedly charged that Pakistan was "expanding" its "interference" in Afghanistan through connivance in armed raids and warned that such actions "cannot but affect" Soviet-Pakistani relations. Gromyko also called upon Islamabad to display the "necessary realism" to encourage progress at the UN-sponsored indirect talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan and affirmed, as he has in the past, that the Soviet Union favors a "political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan."

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From 1980 through 1982, Soviet reports on comparable meetings have included Moscow's charge that Pakistani territory is being used to launch attacks into Afghanistan. None previously, however, had portrayed an escalation of the Pakistani role. The PRAVDA account of a 10 June 1983 Gromyko-Khan meeting in Moscow was even milder, omitting

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charges about Pakistani responsibility for hostilities and suggesting positively that an Afghan political settlement would create "more favorable conditions" for the development of Soviet-Pakistani relations.*

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Gromyko did not refer directly to Pakistan in his 27 September address to the UN General Assembly, but his traditional call for a halt to "outside interference" in Afghanistan was couched in sharper terms than in recent years. As reported by TASS, Gromyko denounced the "foes of the Afghan people" for "forming, arming, and infiltrating" antigovernment "gangs of bandits and saboteurs" into Afghanistan. The opening Soviet address to the General Assembly last year referred less dramatically to "military incursions" and "outside interference." In 1982 Gromyko called for a halt to "armed intervention from the outside." He last referred to Pakistan's role directly in his 1981 speech, when he accused Pakistan of serving as the "main bridgehead" for "armed intrusions."

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PRAVDA Editorial Article

Accusations of Pakistani involvement in an expansion of hostile activities in Afghanistan was raised authoritatively earlier this year in a 29 June PRAVDA editorial article. Taking particular note of the visit to Pakistan in May by Vice President Bush, the editorial article charged that during the Reagan Administration, Pakistan had been transformed into a base for aggression against Afghanistan "on a far broader practical footing than it was by that government's predecessors." The Vice President's visit, PRAVDA asserted, heralded an increased arms flow to Afghan insurgents and is evidence that Washington, with Islamabad harnessed "even more firmly to its chariot," seeks not a normalization but a "further exacerbation" of the situation.

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The editorial article elevated a number of familiar Soviet charges against Pakistan to a more authoritative level and accused the Pakistani leadership of pursuing policies incompatible with the security interests

*Gromyko's failure to attend the UN General Assembly meeting in September 1983 meant that no comparable meeting with the Pakistani foreign minister took place at that time.

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of South Asia and against the interests of its own people.
Specifically, PRAVDA charged that:

- Pakistan is acquiring arms beyond its legitimate defense needs, thereby posing a direct threat to India.
- Pakistan has granted the United States access to military bases in Pakistan, which in turn are assigned a "key" role in US military plans in the region.
- Islamabad is becoming "one of the main points of US imperialist strategy" and is doing so "not by dint of circumstance but in accordance with the conscious political choice of the country's present leadership," which is attempting to forge a new Middle East alliance involving Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.

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